

Communications Authority press release

The following is issued on behalf of the Communications Authority:

This press release summarises the decisions of the Communications Authority (CA) following its 116th meeting held in April 2022.

New class licence for regulating the use of and trade in 6 GHz devices for Wireless Local Area Network (WLAN)

Having considered the views and comments received in response to a public consultation conducted at the end of 2021, the CA today (April 29) created a class licence for regulating the use of and trade in 6 GHz devices for WLAN (the WLAN Device Class Licence) and varied the existing class licence for provision of public WLAN services (the WLAN Service Class Licence).

With the advance of technology, there are new WLAN devices operating in the 5925 – 6425 MHz band (such as the commonly known Wi-Fi 6E devices and collectively referred to as 6 GHz devices) which support faster data rates and low latency, and hence higher performance. Under the light-handed approach adopted by the CA, the WLAN Device Class Licence enables the general public and business entities to use and trade 6 GHz devices for WLAN applications without the need to individually apply for a licence or pay any licence fee. Pursuant to the new WLAN Device Class Licence, it is a compulsory requirement for manufacturers, suppliers and vendors to seek for certification of access points of 6 GHz devices against the stipulated technical requirements and affix the CA prescribed label on them for sale in Hong Kong so as to facilitate easy identification of compliant products by the general public and deter the supply of non-compliant products which may cause potential radio interference to other legitimate telecommunications uses. Service providers may also use 6 GHz devices for provision of WLAN services under the varied WLAN Service Class Licence.

A copy of the concerned class licences is available at www.coms-auth.hk/en/licensing/telecommunications/class/index.html.

Approval for changes in shareholding structures of Hong Kong Cable Television Limited (HKCTV) and Fantastic Television Limited (Fantastic TV)

The CA has approved the applications by HKCTV and Fantastic TV for the changes in their shareholding structures arising from the general offer made by Celestial Pioneer Limited (Celestial Pioneer) to acquire the shares of i-CABLE Communications Limited (i-CABLE), the major shareholder of HKCTV and Fantastic TV, with retrospective effect from February 23, 2022.

On January 20, 2022, the CA approved the applications by HKCTV and

Fantastic TV for the first stage of changes in their shareholding structures. As the subsequent general offer required under the Codes on Takeovers and Mergers and Share Buy-backs promulgated by the Securities and Futures Commission resulted in further changes in their shareholding structures, HKCTV and Fantastic TV made another application to the CA for this second stage of changes.

According to HKCTV and Fantastic TV, the shareholding changes did not bring about any material change to the legal and beneficial ownership of the licensees. Upon completion of the changes in the shareholding structures of HKCTV and Fantastic TV, which took effect over the period from February 23, 2022, through March 17, 2022, Celestial Pioneer's direct and indirect shareholding (through Forever Top (Asia) Limited (Forever Top)) in i-CABLE is 50 per cent (see Note).

In approving the applications, the CA is satisfied that HKCTV and Fantastic TV will continue to comply with all applicable regulatory requirements under the Broadcasting Ordinance (Cap. 562) and the licences concerned, and that they will be able to honour the investment and programming commitments they have made under their respective licences after completion of the shareholding changes.

Renewal of other licensable television programme service (Other Licensable TV) licences

The CA approved the applications by Guest Tek Asia Pacific Limited and MVI Systems Limited for renewal of their other licensable TV licences for the provision of television programme services to hotel rooms in Hong Kong for 12 years.

Following the renewal of the above licences, there will be 20 other licensable TV licensees providing television programme services to 60 hotels in Hong Kong.

Note: At present, Celestial Pioneer's direct shareholding in i-CABLE is 6.78 per cent. Forever Top's shareholding in i-CABLE remains at 43.22 per cent.

[Missing man in Yuen Long located](#)

Police located a man who went missing in Yuen Long.

Tam Kin-yip, aged 52, went missing after he was last seen on Yuen Long Pau Cheung Square on March 16. His family made a report to Police on April 24.

Police located the man at MTR Tsing Yi Station this afternoon (April 29). He sustained no injuries and no suspicious circumstances were detected.

Provisional financial results for the year ended March 31, 2022

The Government announced today (April 29) its provisional financial results for the year ended March 31, 2022.

Expenditure for the year ended March 31, 2022, amounted to HK\$693.3 billion and revenue HK\$693.6 billion, resulting in a surplus of HK\$29.4 billion after receipt of net proceeds of HK\$29.1 billion from issuance of green bonds under the Government Green Bond Programme (Green Bond).

Expenditure for the year recorded a variance of 4.7 per cent (HK\$34.5 billion) lower than the original estimate, while revenue recorded a variance of 17.3 per cent (HK\$102.5 billion) higher than the original estimate.

The consolidated surplus for the year was HK\$10.5 billion higher than the revised estimate of HK\$18.9 billion. Revenue was HK\$10.8 billion (1.6 per cent) higher than expected, mainly attributable to earnings and profits tax (HK\$10.3 billion higher). Expenditure was HK\$5.7 billion (0.8 per cent) lower than forecast for the revised estimate mainly due to lower-than-expected requirements. Receipt from issuance of green bonds was HK\$6 billion (17.1 per cent) lower than the revised estimate.

The fiscal reserves stood at HK\$957.2 billion as at March 31, 2022.

A Government spokesperson said that these are provisional figures pending the final closing of the annual accounts. According to past experience, any changes to the provisional figures are unlikely significant.

Detailed figures are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

TABLE 1. CONSOLIDATED ACCOUNT (PROVISIONAL) (Note 1)

	Month ended March 31, 2022 HK\$ million	Year ended March 31, 2022 HK\$ million
Revenue	31,834.5	693,575.6
Expenditure	(74,709.9)	(693,320.3)

(Deficit)/Surplus before issuance of Green Bond	(42,875.4)	255.3
Net proceeds from issuance of Green Bond	–	29,124.2
(Deficit)/Surplus after issuance of Green Bond	(42,875.4)	29,379.5
Financing		
Domestic		
Banking Sector (Note 2)	41,362.1	(29,732.0)
Non-Banking Sector	1,513.3	352.5
External	–	–
Total	42,875.4	(29,379.5)

Government Debts as at March 31, 2022 (Note 3)

HK\$56,680 million

Debts Guaranteed by Government as at March 31, 2022 (Note 4)

HK\$119,712.9 million

TABLE 2. FISCAL RESERVES (PROVISIONAL)

	Month ended March 31, 2022 HK\$ million	Year ended March 31, 2022 HK\$ million
Fiscal Reserves at start of period	1,000,021.9	927,767.0
Consolidated (Deficit)/Surplus after issuance of Green Bond	(42,875.4)	29,379.5
Fiscal Reserves at end of period (Note 5)	957,146.5	957,146.5

Notes:

1. This Account consolidates the General Revenue Account and the following eight Funds: Capital Works Reserve Fund, Capital Investment Fund, Civil Service Pension Reserve Fund, Disaster Relief Fund, Innovation and Technology Fund, Land Fund, Loan Fund and Lotteries Fund. It excludes the Bond Fund, the balance of which is not part of the fiscal reserves. The Bond Fund balance as at March 31, 2022, was HK\$210,026 million.
2. Includes transactions with the Exchange Fund and resident banks.
3. These were the Green Bonds (equivalent to HK\$56,680 million as at March 31, 2022) issued under the Government Green Bond Programme. They were denominated in US dollars (US\$4,500 million with maturity from May 2024 to February 2051), euros (1,750 million euros with maturity from November 2026 to November 2041) and Renminbi (RMB5,000 million with maturity from November 2024 to November 2026). They do not include the outstanding bonds with nominal value of HK\$171,371 million and alternative bonds with nominal value of US\$1,000 million (equivalent to HK\$7,828 million as at March 31, 2022) issued under the Government Bond Programme (with proceeds credited to the Bond Fund). Of these bonds under the Government Bond Programme (including Silver Bonds with nominal value of HK\$47,571 million, which may be redeemed before maturity upon request from bond holders), bonds with nominal value of HK\$31,709 million will mature within the period from April 2022 to March 2023 and the rest within the period from April 2023 to March 2036.
4. Includes guarantees provided under the SME Loan Guarantee Scheme launched in 2001, the Special Loan Guarantee Scheme launched in 2008, the SME Financing Guarantee Scheme launched in 2012 and a commercial loan of the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation.
5. Includes HK\$257,367 million, being the balance of the Land Fund held in the name of "Future Fund", for long-term investments initially up to December 31, 2025. The Future Fund also includes HK\$4,800 million, being one-third of the actual surplus in 2015-16 as top-up.

Special temporary measures under Public Transport Fare Subsidy Scheme

The Transport Department (TD) today (April 29) reminded members of the public that from May 1 to October 31, the Government will temporarily relax the monthly threshold of the Public Transport Fare Subsidy Scheme from \$400 to \$200 and increase the monthly subsidy cap from \$400 to \$500.

In view of the impact of the fifth wave of the epidemic on the local economy, special temporary measures under the Scheme will be introduced. From

May 1 to October 31, the Government will provide a subsidy amounting to one-third of the actual monthly public transport expenses in excess of \$200, subject to a maximum of \$500 per month for each Octopus.

The TD also reminded commuters that they can collect the subsidy of the previous month from the 16th of each month. The subsidy for each month is valid for collection within the next three months.

For details of the Scheme, please visit the website (www.ptfss.gov.hk). Commuters can also check their record of public transport expenses and subsidy amount through the Subsidy Enquiry website (subsidy-enquiry.ptfss.hk), the Octopus App or the Scheme hotline 2969 5500.

[Exchange Fund Abridged Balance Sheet and Currency Board Account](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) announced today (April 29) that the total assets of the Exchange Fund amounted to HK\$4,508.4 billion as at March 31, 2022, HK\$90.5 billion lower than that at the end of February 2022. Foreign currency assets decreased by HK\$66.3 billion and Hong Kong dollar assets decreased by HK\$24.2 billion.

The decline in foreign currency assets was mainly due to the withdrawals of Fiscal Reserves placements, a decrease in the month-end balances of unsettled purchase of securities and the mark-to-market revaluation on investments. The decline in Hong Kong dollar assets was mainly due to a reduction in bank borrowings and the mark-to-market revaluation on Hong Kong equities.

The Currency Board Account shows that the Monetary Base at the end of March 2022 was HK\$2,147.2 billion, decreased by HK\$1.7 billion, or 0.1 per cent, from the end of February 2022. The decline was mainly due to a decrease in the outstanding amount of Certificates of Indebtedness.

The amount of Backing Assets decreased by HK\$8.8 billion, or 0.4 per cent, to HK\$2,355.7 billion. The decrease was mainly attributable to the mark-to-market revaluation on investments. The backing ratio decreased from 110.03 per cent at the end of February 2022 to 109.71 per cent at the end of March 2022.

At present, four press releases relating to the Exchange Fund's data are issued by the HKMA each month. Three of these releases are issued to disseminate monetary data in accordance with the International Monetary

Fund's Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS). The fourth press release, on the Exchange Fund's Abridged Balance Sheet and Currency Board Account, is made in accordance with the HKMA's policy of maintaining a high level of transparency. For the month of April 2022, the scheduled dates for issuing the press releases are as follows:

April 7 (Issued)	SDDS International Reserves (Hong Kong's Latest Foreign Currency Reserve Assets Figures)
April 14 (Issued)	SDDS Analytical Accounts of the Central Bank (Analytical Accounts of the Exchange Fund)
April 29	SDDS Template on International Reserves and Foreign Currency Liquidity
April 29	Exchange Fund Abridged Balance Sheet and Currency Board Account